



MSF 132-007-356-2

08 August 2016

Dear SCFA Administrators,

Extension of the SCFA Grant Period from 12 months to 24 months

1 The Government provides Student Care Fee Assistance (SCFA) to lower income families to defray the cost of student care. We thank you for assisting these families in their applications for SCFA thus far. We also appreciate the sharing by some centres with us on their thoughts to improve the scheme administration.

2 We are pleased to inform you that **with effect from 1 Aug 2016, the approval period of SCFA will be extended from 12 months to 24 months. This applies to Student Care Centres (SCCs) that meet the following conditions:**

- a. SCCs that are registered with MSF as SCFA Administrators;
- b. SCCs that have complied with MSF's requirements as SCFA Administrators;
- c. SCCs that have passed the MSF audit in the current cycle (i.e. Jan 2015 to Dec 2016) and have rectified all Areas for Improvement (AFIs) arising from the audit within the stipulated deadline.

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3 If your centre meets the conditions in paragraph 2, the improvement will be effected in two ways:

a. For approvals granted with subsidy starting from 1 October 2015 for a 12-month period

- The grant period will be auto-extended from 12 months to 24 months. **No application is required.** E.g. if a student's SCFA had already been approved for the grant period from Mar 2016 to Feb 2017, the expiry date will be auto-extended to Feb 2018.
- By end of Sept 2016, qualified centre will receive from us a list of students who have their grant period extended to 24 months. Upon receipt of the list, we seek your help to inform the parents that they do not need to apply for an extension and their grant period have been extended.

b. For approvals granted on and after 1 Aug 2016

- The grant period will be approved upfront for 24 months.

4 Please note that the extension of grant period **does not apply** to students who are studying in Primary 6 or above, or are given interim SCFA (i.e. approval for grant period of less than 12 months), or are given higher subsidies under letter of recommendation (LOR).

5 For SCCs that have yet to be audited in this cycle (Jan 2015 – Dec 2016), they can qualify for the extended grant period after they have passed MSF audit and rectified all AFIs. Please refer to FAQ (enclosed) for more details and exceptions.

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6 We hope that the extended grant period will help ease the administrative load on SCCs and parents. On this note, we seek your understanding that with the extended grant period, MSF or its appointed agents may conduct unannounced checks to verify the student records on SCFA for governance purposes.

7 Going forward, further measures will be rolled out to improve the scheme administration. You will be kept informed in due course. We thank you for continuing to work with us to enable lower income families to access student care. If you require further clarifications, please email us at [MSF_Comcare_SCFA @msf.gov.sg](mailto:MSF_Comcare_SCFA@msf.gov.sg).

Yours sincerely



LEE CHIN SOON

DIRECTOR

SERVICE DELIVERY AND COORDINATION DIVISION

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

FAQs

General	
Q1	Who are eligible for Student Care Fee Assistance (SCFA)?
A	<p>To be eligible for SCFA, an applicant needs to meet all of the following criteria:</p> <p><u>Apply directly through the Student Care Centres (SCCs)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both parents should be working at least 56 hours per month. If any of them is not working, he or she must be looking for work, on medical leave, is incarcerated, is a certified full-time caregiver for a dependent, or has other valid reasons. The applicant must provide relevant supporting documents; • The family's total gross monthly income is \$4,000 or less, or the monthly household per capita income is \$1,000 or less; • Child is between 7 years and 14 years of age; • Child attends a registered SCC; and • Child is a Singapore Citizen, or Permanent Resident with at least one immediate family member in the same household who is a Singapore Citizen. <p><u>Agency-referral (accompanied by letter of recommendation from Agency)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both parents are working. If any of them is not

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	<p>working, he or she must be looking for work or has other valid reasons with supporting documents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family is known to Family Service Centre (FSC), MSF Child Protection Service or Specialist Agency for at least 6 months prior to application, or will be case-managed by Agency for the next 6 months; or • Referred by MSF Foster Care; and • Family's gross household monthly income is \$2,000 or less, or monthly PCI is \$650 or less. <p>For families which exceed the above income criteria, agency should first seek approval from MSF via MSF Comcare SCFA@msf.gov.sg on an appeal basis.</p>
Extension of grant period to 24 months	
Q2	What are the reasons if a SCC is not included in the extension?
A	<p>a. The SCC(s) fails to rectify the Areas for Improvement (AFIs) that arose from MSF audit within the stipulated deadline;</p> <p>b. The SCC(s) is under investigation for making or has made fraudulent claims; or</p> <p>c. The SCC(s) has not yet been audited in the current audit cycle (i.e. Jan 2015 to Dec 2016). Exceptions will be made for school-based SCCs. These SCCs should also have a good track record with MSF. If (a) or/and (b) occurs, these SCCs will be excluded from the extension of the subsidy grant period.</p>

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	Above conditions will be strictly applied.
Q3	My SCC has not yet been audited in this cycle (i.e. Jan 2015 to Dec 2016). When will my SCC be included in the extension of grant period?
A	<p>After your SCC passes the MSF audit and rectifies all Areas for Improvements (AFIs) within the stipulated deadline, your eligible students will have their grant period approved for 24 months at their next application. For existing approvals of 12-month period that are still valid in the month your SCC passes the audit, if met criteria, they will be auto-extended to 24 months backend. E.g. If a student's SCFA expires in Dec 2016 and your SCC passes the audit in Nov 2016, the grant period will be auto-extended to Dec 2017 for eligible students.</p>
Q4	Under what circumstances will a SCC's privilege to the extended grant period of 24 months be withdrawn?
A	<p>The privilege may be withdrawn in any of the following scenarios:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The SCC fails to comply with the prevailing SCFA Administrator requirements; b) The SCC fails to rectify the Areas for Improvement (AFIs) that arose from MSF audit within the stipulated deadline; or c) The SCC is being investigated for making or has made fraudulent claims. <p>Notwithstanding the above, MSF reserves the right to withdraw the privilege at any time should it assess necessary and appropriate to do so.</p>

Q5	After the grant period was extended to 24 months, the parent informs the SCC that he/she wishes to be reassessed for a higher SCFA tier as his/her Gross Household Income has dropped. Is this allowed? What should the SCC advise the parent?
A	Yes, the request can be considered. The affected parent should submit the request through Annex 2: Appeal form with his/her latest income supporting documents stating the effective date of the new Gross Salary through the enrolled SCC to MSF at MSF Comcare SCFA@msf.gov.sg . No new application is required. MSF will re-assess and inform the parent of the outcome, with a copy to the SCC. Please note that the information has to reach MSF within three months after the parent is aware of the change in his/her Gross Income.
Q6	If only one parent is working, will the grant period be extended to 24 months?
A	<p>Yes, the grant period will be extended to 24 months for the following parents provided all other eligibility criteria are met and supporting documents are received by MSF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widowed parent; • Single parent who is divorced, has not re-married and has care and control of the child; • Unwed parent who is the child's biological parent, and whose name is stated in the child's birth cert. If the birth cert has both parents' names, the unwed applicant is to submit the supporting document of his/her marital status along with the

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	<p>application form: (i) a statutory declaration or (ii) result of marital status from the e-service ("Search for Marriage Records") at ROM website; or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parent is certified by doctor to be permanently unfit to work/medically unfit for 24 months or more.
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